DEATH CERTIFIER (County Attorney, Coroner) MANUAL FOR THE NEBRASKA ELECTRONIC DEATH REGISTRATION SYSTEM

July 3, 2016

Once you are set up in the system, you will receive an email from the DHHS help desk with your User ID, a temporary password and a link to the password station with instructions.

The password station will be used to change passwords, unlock accounts, and to reset passwords if they are forgotten. Passwords must be at least 8 characters in length and include at least three of the following criteria:

- Upper case letter
- Lower case letter
- Number
- Symbol

You will receive an email notification beginning 15 days in advance when it is about to expire.

The web site link is: https://passmanext-dhhs.ne.gov/AIMS/PS/

You will also receive installation instructions for the Nebraska Vital Records Electronic Registration System from Vital Records staff. Once the installation instructions have been completed and you have set up your password via the password station, you will be ready to log into the system.

The production web site link is:
https://vitalrecords-dhhs.ne.gov/VrWebprod/Login.aspx

When logging in, you may see a brief broadcast message. Please read if it pertains to you. Select Ok to continue into the system.
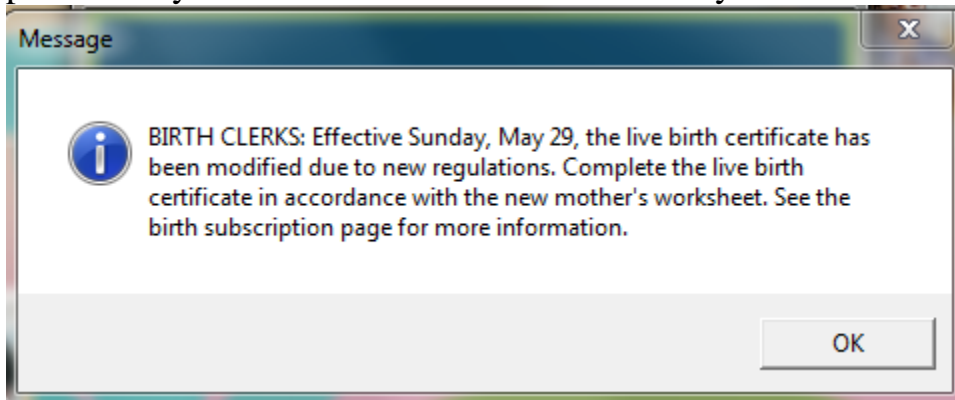

If you have multiple locations, highlight by clicking on the location that contains the record that you need to complete. Then click on the "Select" button. Otherwise, when logged in, you should see following picture with the Sandhill Cranes. The "Training" system will have a different picture:

When you have records to complete, select "Work Queue" and then "Coroner/CntyAtty in Progress" and that will display the list of records to complete. The following is a picture of the "Training" system.
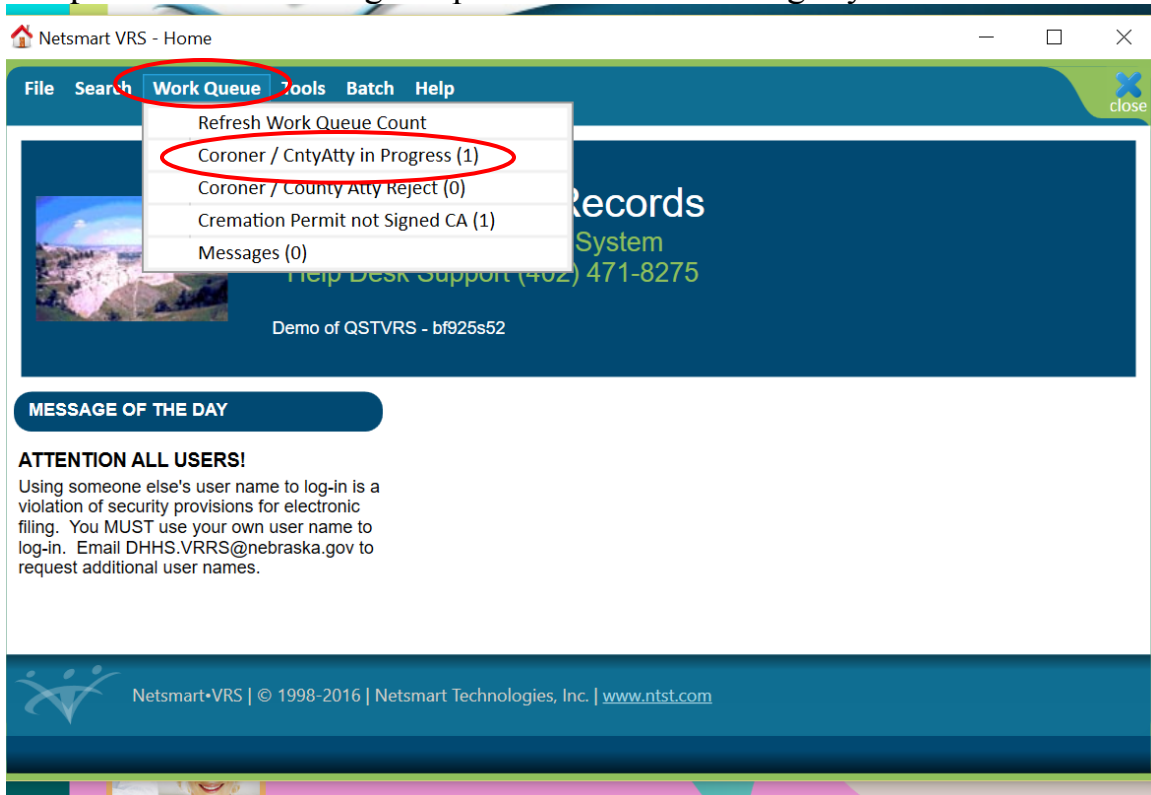
Select by clicking on the record that you need to complete and select "Display".
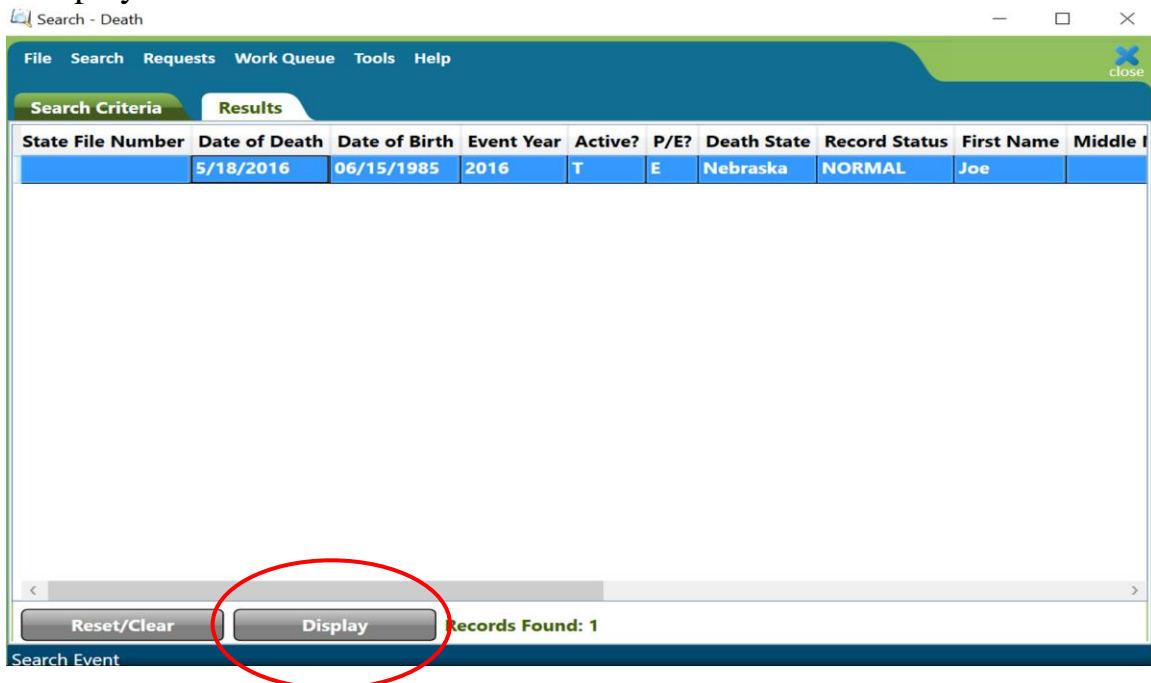
The system security is by user location. Therefore, you may see records in your work queue that are assigned to other certifiers in your office. This allows anyone set up to use the system at your location to have access to the records. If you are not available to complete a record, this allows another certifier at your location the ability to complete the record for you. We also have a user role for other employees located in your office. Depending on how your office is set up, they can enter part or all the information required. Their role can do everything the certifier role can do except sign records.

When you have a record to complete, you or your office staff should receive notice depending on your preferred method of contact. If by email, email notifications are automatically generated when the funeral home assigns the record to the certifier and saves the record. Up to two email addresses can be notified. The email address(es) does not need to be the certifier's. Use whatever works best for how your office functions. If the preferred method is by fax, the funeral home will fax the notification through the system. If you are completing death records by fax attestation, certifiers will not need to sign onto the system to complete death records. Someone on your staff will do the entry into the system and the certifier will be attesting by fax. This method works well if you seldom have a death record to complete. If you are interested in this method, please contact the Vital Records office for more information.

When the record is "Displayed", the following screen will appear:

The cursor will be at the first field that you need to enter (goldish-yellow). If you need to see information that the funeral home entered, you can select the other tabs such as the "Decedent" tab. You will be able to view but not change this information. If you think the date of death entered by the funeral home is incorrect, please contact the funeral home. The funeral home's contact information is under the "Disposition" tab.

If you cannot determine the cause or manner of death because it is under investigation or waiting toxicology results, check the "Pending Investigation" box. This should be used so the record can be filed within the statutory time frame without entering a cause of death. The record will be queried back to you for completion once the investigation has been completed or toxicology results are available.

Enter the immediate cause of death in Part 1, line a. **Do not** enter terminal events such as Cardiac Arrest or Respiratory Arrest without showing the etiology on the next lines.

Use your **Tab** key to navigate through the system. This will help make sure that all required fields have been completed.

The underlying cause of death or what triggered the chain of events that led to death should be entered last. In the example below, Septic Shock should not be entered without showing the etiology. Depending on what is entered, you may get various pop-ups. This helps with getting the cause of death completed correctly. This reduces the number of records that may be rejected or queried back to you. In the example below, Override the edit and provide additional information in the lower lines. The Approximate Interval from Onset to Death on line "a" is required. If this interval is not known, enter Unknown.

If something is misspelled, a red underline will appear under the word.

Right click on the word and if the spell check dictionary has an alternative, a list will appear. If available, just select the correct spelling.

The following is an example of a properly completed Cause of Death section.

Please do not use abbreviations. Some abbreviations may have multiple meanings. If you happen to abbreviate, the system will try and replace the abbreviation.

In the example above, if OK is selected, the abbreviation will be replaced.

If the decedent was a male as is the case in this example, the pregnancy question will be protected and you won't need to answer it. You also won't need to answer if a female and outside a certain age range. If the field is not protected, then it will need to be answered.

If you enter anything other than Natural Causes in the Manner of Death, you will be required to enter the injury questions. If the Manner of Death is Natural Causes, the Injury section will be protected and automatically skipped. If you selected the Pending Investigation check box above, then make sure to select "Pending Investigation" for the Manner of Death.

For Non-Natural deaths, if drug toxicity or poisoning was involved, please specify as much detail as possible. Please include the drug(s) involved and if they were prescribed. This includes Intoxication by drug. If not included in the cause of death section, include the details in the "Describe how injury occurred" field. For Natural cause deaths, with drug usage or addiction indicated, please specify the drug(s).

Indications of Non-Natural deaths would be any Fractures, injuries, traumas, wounds (please indicate the site), Asphyxiation, Aspiration, Exhaustion, Exposure, etc.

A common error observed is that Natural Causes is selected instead of Accident for the Manner of Death when a Hip Fracture is involved. This will typically result in the record being rejected back to you for correction. The following is an example of a properly completed death certificate involving a hip fracture:

File   Search   Requests   Actions   Work Queue   Linking   Tools   Help

Decedent | Dec History | Disposition | Cause of Death | Certifier | Demographics | Complete | Flags | Fax

Pending Investigation ☐

Cause of Death (Part 1) Enter the chain of events that directly caused death.

a. Immediate Cause (Final disease or condition resulting in Death) | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**
Pneumonia | 2 Days

List Conditions leading to the cause on line A.

b. Due to or as a Consequence of | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**
Left Hip Fracture |

c. Due to or as a Consequence of | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**
Fall At Nursing Home |

d. Due to or as a Consequence of | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**

Cause of Death (Part 2)

Other significant conditions contributing to death.
Dementia, Hypertension

Cause of Death (cont)

Female Pregnant | **Manner of Death** | **Was Medical Examiner or Coroner Contacted?** | **Autopsy?**
8. NOT APPLICABLE. | ACCIDENT | N | N

Were Autopsy Findings Available to Complete Cause of Death?
X

Injury

Transportation Injury? If Transportation Injury
N

Date of Injury Known? Date of Injury   Time of Injury am/pm   Place of Injury   Injury at work?
Y | 02/28/2016 | 02:15 | PM | Nursing Home | N

Describe how Injury occurred
Fell when getting out of bed.

The following is an example of a properly filled out death certificate involving a gunshot. Please note, specify the type of gun used if known.

Death (Event Year = 2016)

File   Search   Requests   Actions   Work Queue   Linking   Tools   Help

Decedent | Dec History | Disposition | Cause of Death | Certifier | Demographics | Complete | Flags | Fax

Pending Investigation ☐

Cause of Death (Part 1) Enter the chain of events that directly caused death.

a. Immediate Cause (Final disease or condition resulting in Death) | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**
Penetration Brain Injury | 2 Hours

List Conditions leading to the cause on line A.

b. Due to or as a Consequence of | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**
Gunshot Wound To The Head | 2 Hours

c. Due to or as a Consequence of | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**

d. Due to or as a Consequence of | **Approx. Interval - Onset to Death**

Cause of Death (Part 2)

Other significant conditions contributing to death.

Cause of Death (cont)

Female Pregnant | **Manner of Death** | **Was Medical Examiner or Coroner Contacted?** | **Autopsy?**
8. NOT APPLICABLE. | ACCIDENT | Y | Y

Were Autopsy Findings Available to Complete Cause of Death?
Y

Injury

Transportation Injury? If Transportation Injury
N

Date of Injury Known? Date of Injury   Time of Injury am/pm   Place of Injury   Injury at work?
Y | 07/02/2016 | 04:58 | PM | Home | N

Describe how Injury occurred
Decedent cleaning handgun had contact wound to the right temple.

Address of Injury | **State** | **City**
1234 Avenue A | Nebraska | Scottsbluff

Event data was saved. | 0 Alerts:

Enter Y or N for the Medical Examiner or Coroner Contacted field. Enter Y or N for the Autopsy question. If Y, then the next question will also need to be answered (Were Autopsy Findings Available to Complete Cause of Death).

The time of death is not in military time so enter the time of death and then indicate am or pm. If the time of death was 12:00, then enter midnight or noon. If the death was unattended and a time of death could not be determined or is unknown, enter 9999 for the time of death and Unknown for the am/pm field. If you do not know the exact time of death but know the approximate time, you can enter in the approximate time of death. Just make sure to select the Approximate check box.

For the "Tobacco Contribute" question, enter Y for Yes, N for No, P for Probable, or U for Unknown. For the "Has Organ or Tissue Donation been considered" question, enter N or Y. If Y, then the "Was Consent Granted" question will also need to be completed. The Certifier section will remain empty until the record is signed. This information will be automatically filled in from information we have in a table.

When completing a record, if the decedent's method of disposition is cremation, the "Signed OK to Cremate" box will be available. By selecting "Y", the funeral home can print of the cremation permit with your electronic signature. For deaths that occur in Douglas or Lancaster counties, the county health department also has permission to approve cremation permits.

Your role security allows you to have access to deaths that occur in your county. For example, if a record is assigned to a physician, you will still have access to the record to approve the cremation permit. The records that require your approval are easily found under your Work Queue by selecting Cremation Permit not Signed CA. The records will remain in your work queue until you either approve the cremation permit or the record has been filed by the State.

When the record is completed, enter Y in the "Medical Complete or Record Pending" question. You are completing and signing the record for the information you currently have so statutory timelines can be met. If it is pending investigation, the record will be filed and queried back to you to obtain complete information when it is known.

If a required field was skipped, the system will let you know. In this case, the Medical Examiner contacted question was skipped.

When selecting OK, the following pop-up will occur. Select Re-Key the field and the system will return to the missed question.

Answer the skipped question and then go back to the medical complete question. If field edits were over-ridden, you may need to verify one more time before being able to sign. Otherwise, after entering Y in the Medical Complete or Record Pending field, the cursor will advance to the Coroner/Attorney Sign field.

Enter a Y and then Save the record by clicking on the Save icon.

An email will automatically be generated to the funeral home letting them know that the certifier has signed the record.

If you want to print a copy for your records, go to Requests→Documents and then either select if you want a condensed version (letter size) or the full version (legal size).

If there are questions concerning the record, you will either receive a faxed query or the record will be rejected. If it is queried, an email will be generated indicating the record has been queried and that you should soon be receiving a fax. If it is rejected, an email will be generated indicating the record was rejected. If it is rejected, an electronic note indicating the reason will be attached to the record.

At the bottom of the record, you will notice a Note Present. Sometimes, funeral homes will also attach a note indicating the time of death. Please review notes when they are present.

To display the note, double click on the green Note Present. You can also display the note by selecting Actions→Show Notes.

If you need to search for a death that has already been completed or the death occurred in your county, select Search→Death. Enter enough information to locate the record and then select Search.

If your contact information changes such as your phone, fax or email address, you can change this yourself or staff that has access to the system can also change the information for you. Select Search→Physician.
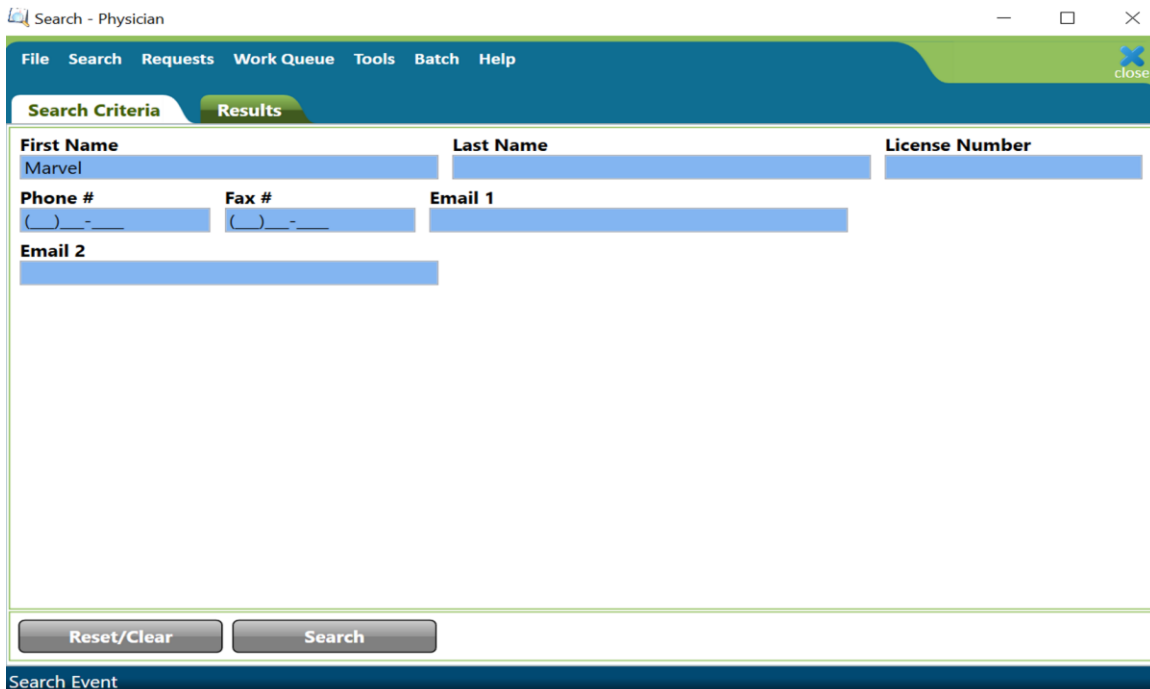
Enter enough information to find the system user(s) that need updated and then select Search. Then select and display the record that needs changed.

Update the appropriate fields and select Save.

Under Help, you will find other useful information including the "Handbook for Coroners" created by the National Center for Health Statistics. It has further detail on how to properly fill out a death certificate and the importance of accurate and complete cause of death information. Also, go to the Subscription Page link and select Death. Please subscribe to this page. This is how we will inform you of new information that pertains to the death certificate or death system. The Vital Statistics Reports has a section on death statistics. Please review if you would like to see how the cause of death data are published.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Questions on **how to** enter a record or system questions:

Vital Records Help Desk Phone: (402) 471-8275

Questions on **what to** put in a field:

Debra Firman, Nosologist (402) 471-0912
Christine Noren, Nosologist (402) 471-0912